

Urban District of Burnham-on-Sea

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1963



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BRIDGWATER BOROUGH AND RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILS.
BURNHAM-ON-SEA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

*With the Compliments
of the Medical Officer of Health.*

ALBERT STREET,
BRIDGWATER.



U R B A N D I S T R I C T O F B U R N H A M - O N - S E A

WORKS, HEALTH AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE 1963

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WING CDR. J.M. ADAMS

Vice-Chairman:

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REV. C.J. WILLIAMS

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1963

Medical Officer of Health:

R.H. WATSON, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Assistant Medical Officer (Somerset C.C.)

CHRISTINE M. ROOKE, M.B., B.S.

Building and Chief Public Health Inspector:

W.B. GRAHAM, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Housing Officer and Assistant Public Health Inspector:

H.F. ROBINSON, M.A.P.H.I.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1963

Health Department,
Albert Street,
BRIDGWATER

Tel: Bridgwater 2689

August, 1964.

To:

The Chairmen and Members of the
Burnham-on-Sea Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the Urban District, and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1963. The report is set out in the manner of previous years, so that comparison with former reports can easily be made.

The health of the Urban District has been good during the year and apart from measles there was almost a complete absence of notifiable infectious diseases. 1963 was a "measles" year and altogether 473 cases were notified. Fortunately modern treatment has done much to lessen the severity of the complications of this troublesome disease.

Generally the vital statistics continue to be satisfactory and it is satisfactory to note that the illegitimate birth rate fell from 7.00 to 4.96 per cent of all live births.

The prolonged spell of cold weather in the early part of the year presented many problems with frozen and burst pipes. Old people particularly had difficulty in keeping warm and the assistance of voluntary services in distributing extra bed clothes and of "good neighbours" in generally helping their less fortunate brethren, did much to alleviate unnecessary suffering. Nevertheless it was necessary in a few cases for old people to be removed voluntarily from their homes to better accommodation. Despite the extreme conditions to which people were subjected, there was no major outbreak of illness. This was probably due to the fact that temperatures were uniformly low throughout the whole period of the freeze-up, and there were none of the sudden fluctuations which so often result in outbreaks of respiratory illnesses.

Once again I wish to thank the Members of the Council, the Clerk, Officials of other departments and the staff of the Public Health Department, for their willing assistance and co-operation.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

R.H. WATSON.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (including foreshore)	2,246 acres
Population (census 1961)	10,020
Population (Registrar General's estimate) 1963	10,400
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1963	3,270
Rateable value on 31st December, 1963	£349,422
Sum represented by 1d rate on 31st December, 1963	£ 1,328

Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1963

Live Births

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	69	65	134
Illegitimate	5	2	7
	<u>74</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>141</u>

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population	13.56
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	4.96
Still Births	4
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 live and still births	27.59
Total live and still births	145
Infant Deaths (deaths of infants under one year of age)	4
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - total	28.37
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - legitimate	29.85
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - illegitimate	nil
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	28.37
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	28.37
Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births)	55.17
Maternal Mortality (including abortion)	nil
Maternal Mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births	nil

Deaths

Total number of deaths	158
Death rate per 1,000 population	15.19

Births

After allowing for inward and outward transfers the Registrar General's figures show that there were 141 births (74 boys and 67 girls) in the Urban District during 1963, being 30 births less than in 1962. Of these births 7 were illegitimate. This is 4.9% of the total live births, as compared with 7.0% in 1962.

The birth rate of any area is dependent upon the composition of the population in that area. Obviously a population with a high proportion of persons of child bearing age will have more births per 1,000 of the population than an area with an unduly large number of people in the older age groups. To enable the birth rates of different areas to be compared, the Registrar General provides a comparability factor for each Local Authority area, which renders the birth rate of each area comparable with that of a district the population of which is of standard age and sex distribution. The birth rate for the Urban District adjusted in this manner is increased from 13.56 to 16.27 per 1,000 of the population. The birth rate for England and Wales was 18.2.

Birth rates for the Urban District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963
Crude Birth Rate	15.30	14.77	14.16	15.53	13.56
Standardised Birth Rate	17.29	16.69	16.00	17.54	16.27
England and Wales	16.5	17.1	17.4	18.0	18.2

Deaths

The number of deaths registered in the Urban District during 1963 was 145. Of these 36 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand, 49 deaths of Urban District residents registered outside the District. The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the Urban District was 158 (70 males and 88 females). This was 9 more than in the previous year, and gave a crude death rate of 15.19.

This crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the populations of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution. The Registrar General supplies an "Area Comparability Factor" and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can then be compared with the death rate of the country as a whole, or with the mortality of any other local area. The corrected death rate so obtained was 11.24 per 1,000 of the population and this was compared with 12.2 for England and Wales.

Death rates for the Urban District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963
Crude Death Rate	14.10	16.57	14.66	14.55	15.19
Standardised Death Rate	10.29	12.10	11.55	10.47	11.24
England and Wales	11.6	11.5	12.0	11.9	12.2

Of the 153 deaths, 108 occurred in people over the age of 70 years. 28 occurred in people in the productive age groups 20 to 64, and the following table gives the details of deaths in this age group.

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	Total
Malignant neoplasm of lung, bronchus				2		2
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms			1	3	2	6
Vascular lesions of the nervous system					1	1
Coronary disease and angina					6	6
Hypertension with heart disease					1	1
Other heart disease		1				1
Other circulatory disease					1	1
Pneumonia					3	3
Other diseases of respiratory system				1		1
Congenital malformations				1		1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases			1		3	4
Suicide				1		1
		1	2	8	17	28

The following table shows the causes of all deaths and sex distribution:

Cause of Death	M.	F.	Total
All Causes	70	88	158
1. Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	1	-	1
2. Other forms of tuberculosis	-	-	-
3. Syphilitic disease	-	-	-
4. Diphtheria	-	-	-
5. Whooping cough	-	-	-
6. Meningococcal infections	-	-	-
7. Acute poliomyelitis	-	-	-
8. Measles	-	-	-
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	-	-	-
10. Malignant neoplasm of stomach	1	1	2
11. Malignant neoplasm of lung, bronchus	7	2	9
12. Malignant neoplasm of breast	-	2	2
13. Malignant neoplasm of uterus	-	-	-
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	4	14	18
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-	-	-
16. Diabetes	-	-	-
17. Vascular lesions of the nervous system	7	17	24
18. Coronary disease and angina	21	13	34
19. Hypertension with heart disease	1	4	5
20. Other heart disease	3	11	14
21. Other circulatory disease	9	7	16
22. Influenza	-	-	-
23. Pneumonia	3	3	6
24. Bronchitis	3	3	6
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	1	2	3
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	-	1
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	-	1	1
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	-	-	-
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	-	-	-
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-	-
31. Congenital malformations	1	2	3
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	4	4	8
33. Motor vehicle accidents	-	-	-
34. All other accidents	1	2	3
35. Suicide	2	-	2
36. Homicide and operations of war	-	-	-

Cancer Mortality

The number of deaths of Urban District residents from cancer was 31 (males 12, females 19). This was 14 more than the previous year. Cancer deaths constituted 19.4% of the total deaths during the year.

The following table shows the localisation of the disease in the 31 cases:-

Localisation	Number of deaths			
	Male	Female	Total	1962
Stomach	1	1	2	3
Lung, bronchus	7	2	9	2
Breast	-	2	2	2
Uterus	-	-	-	1
Other and unspecified organs	4	14	18	9
Total	12	19	31	17

The ages at which deaths from lung cancer occurred during the last five years is detailed in the following table:-

Year	Under 15	15/24	25/34	35/44	45/54	55/64	Over 65	Total
1959					2	1		3
1960				1		1	3	5
1961					1		3	4
1962						1	1	2
1963					1	1	7	9

The publication of the American report confirming the relationship between heavy smoking and lung cancer made quite an impression on many people and numbers who did not give up smoking altogether changed to pipe or cigar smoking. Nevertheless, it is to the young people that efforts to discourage or stop smoking are best directed and the County Council, as Local Education Authority, have taken steps to bring home to students in school the dangers involved in cigarette smoking. On the other hand it is difficult for teenagers to give particular heed to something which may affect them from middle age onwards.

Deaths from heart Disease

Of 158 deaths, heart disease caused roughly 1 in every 3 (males 25, females 28). It represented 33.6% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 5.1 per 1,000 of the population.

Infantile Mortality

4 infants under one year of age died during the year. This gives an infantile mortality rate of 28.37 per 1,000 of all live births, while the corresponding rate for England and Wales was 20.9.

The following table shows the causes of death:-

Infantile Mortality during 1963

Cause of death	Under 1 week	1 - 4 weeks	1 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	Total under 1 year
General peritonitis	1				1
Prematurity	2				2
Congenital abnormality	1				1
	4				4

Population

The estimated population of the Urban District as at June 1963 was 10,400, which shows an increase of 160 on the previous year. It is interesting to note population changes and the following table illustrates the trend during the past twelve years:-

Year	Population increase	Natural increase	Change due to migration
1952	70	22	+ 48
1953	116	25	+ 91
1954	54	45	+ 9
1955	50	12	+ 38
1956	60	- 6	+ 66
1957	30	- 8	+ 38
1958	- 10	11	- 21
1959	80	16	+ 64
1960	230	- 18	+ 248
1961	- 130	- 5	- 125
1962	350	22	+ 328
1963	160	- 17	+ 177

Natural increase = excess of births over deaths.

NEW LEADER AND CONTROL OVER INFECTION

AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the cases of notifiable diseases that occurred in the Urban District during 1963. The table is drawn up after making the necessary corrections in diagnosis by either the practitioners or the Medical Officers at the Isolation Hospitals

Disease	Under 1 yr	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65 and over	Age unknown	Total	Admitted to Hospital
Measles	12	30	35	49	63	253	10	2	2	3	1	-	-	13	473	
Scarlet fever			1	3	1	2		1							8	1
Whooping cough	1					1	1								3	
Pneumonia								1		1	1				3	
Enteric fever										1					1	
TOTAL	13	30	36	52	64	256	11	4	2	5	2			13	488	1

During the previous year 29 cases of notifiable infectious diseases were notified.

Diphtheria

No cases of diphtheria were notified. During the year 128 children under the age of 5 years and 3 children between the ages of 5 - 15 years (giving a total of 131) were immunised against the disease.

Acute Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis)

No cases were notified.

Poliomyelitis Vaccination

The following tables show the number of persons who received a course of primary vaccination (two injections of Salk vaccine, three injections of quadruple vaccine or three doses of Oral vaccine), and the number of persons who received reinforcements during 1963.

Children born 1963		Children born 1962		Children born 1943-61		Young persons born 1933-42		Persons under 40 years of age & Priority Groups	
Salk	Oral	Salk	Oral	Salk	Oral	Salk	Oral	Salk	Oral
29	5	44	60	2	31	-	4	2	3

Number of persons (all groups) who rec'd a third Salk injection or fourth injection of quadruple vaccine	Number of children of 5 yrs. but under 12 yrs. who rec'd a fourth Salk injection or fifth injection of quadruple vaccine	Number of persons (all groups) who rec'd a reinforcing dose of Oral vaccine following two Salk injections	Number of children of 5 yrs. but under 12 yrs. who rec'd a dose of Oral vaccine after three Salk injections or 3 Oral doses or 2 Salk injs. plus 2 Oral doses
30	23	19	37

Measles

473 cases were notified, as compared with 6 in the previous year.

Scarlet Fever

The number of confirmed cases was 8.

Vaccination against Smallpox

The number of persons vaccinated or revaccinated during the year was 68, as compared with 2,403 in the previous year.

Persons Vaccinated

Under 1 year		1 to 4 years		5 to 14 years		15 years and over	
P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R
28	-	6	2	1	2	5	24

P = Primary vaccination

R = Re-vaccination

Vaccination is now voluntary, but the value of individual vaccination is, in my opinion, undiminished and I would advise all parents to have their children vaccinated, preferably during the second year of life.

Tetanus Immunisation

Tetanus immunisation is now combined with diphtheria immunisation almost as a routine and practically all infants receiving primary immunisation and all school children receiving booster injections are offered a combined vaccine.

The number of children who completed a full course of primary immunisation in the year ended 31st December 1963 was as follows:-

Children born in the years:-

1963	62	61	60	59	54-58	49-53	Total
52	75	-	-	1	3	1	132

Tuberculosis

It is noteworthy to report that in 1963 only 1 new case of respiratory tuberculosis was notified, and that no cases of the non-respiratory form of the disease were reported.

B.C.G. Vaccination

In order to raise the immunity of school leavers to tuberculosis, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to all children between the ages of 13 and 14 years attending schools in the Mid-Somerset Divisional Area. 489 accepted the offer and received a preliminary skin test, the "Heaf Test", to determine whether they had in fact already experienced some infection with tuberculosis. 344 of these gave negative results and were vaccinated with the B.C.G. vaccine.

Food Poisoning

No cases were notified.

GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES

Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens are sent to the laboratory at Musgrove Park Hospital, which forms part of the Public Health Laboratory Service. Results of investigations are available with the minimum of delay and there is good liaison between the laboratory personnel and the field workers in the Public Health Department.

Examinations carried out during the year included:-

Water samples	37
Ice cream samples	27
Food samples	27

Home Help Service

This service is provided by the County Council, with local administration by the Home Help Organiser, with an office at the Health Centre, Mount Street, Bridgwater.

The Home helps have proved of very considerable value and much assistance was given to needy cases. During the year 155 cases received assistance.

These included the following types of case:-

Maternity	6
Old age and infirmity	112
Tuberculosis	4
Chronic sick	21
Post operation	1
Emergency illness	5
Other cases	6

In many cases assisted, the patient or other members of the family would have been unable to remain at home, were it not for the Home Help Service.

In addition to the normal service, arrangements have been made for women to sit up with seriously ill cases where alternative arrangements cannot be made.

The number of Home Helps at 31.12.63 was as follows:-

Full time	8
Part time	22

Welfare of Old People

The Council are now assisting the N.V.S. to provide meals on wheels for old people, and this worthwhile service is much appreciated by the recipients. An average of 48 meals per week are distributed.

National Assistance Act, 1948 - Section 47

A number of cases were assisted through informal action, and in no case was it necessary for the Council to take statutory action to secure the admission of an old person to suitable accommodation.

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Housing

The number of permanent dwellings in the Urban District	3,495
The number of permanent dwellings owned by the Local Authority	551
Number of houses declared unfit under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1957	-
Number of houses closed as a result of an undertaking given by the owner or following the issue of Closing Orders	5
Number of houses made fit during the year	23

	Houses/flats erected during the year		Houses in course of erection	
	For slum clearance	For other purposes	For slum clearance	For other purposes
Local Authority	-	-	-	55
Private Enterprise	-	85	-	71
Total	-	85		126

In the period from 1st April 1945 to 31st December 1965 a total of 997 houses have been built. These were made up of 415 by the Local Authority and 582 by private enterprise.

At the end of the year there were 289 applicants for Council houses.

Water Supplies

The mains water supply was satisfactory both as to quality and quantity. The water is treated by chlorination, and bacteriological tests were carried out on the treated water on 24 occasions, all of which gave excellent results.

Sewage Disposal

As mentioned in previous reports, the condition of the main sewerage system of the District gives rise to anxiety. Emergency measures have been taken by the Council to repair the main sewer at certain manholes which were known to be in a critical state. The sewers generally are overloaded and are frequently surcharged. Building development continues at a comparatively rapid rate and it is therefore satisfactory to record that the Council have instructed the Engineer to prepare a detailed major scheme to re sewer the Urban District. Consequentially reorganisation of the Engineer's Department has been implemented.

For many years I have directed attention to unsatisfactory conditions at the Clyce outfalls at Highbridge, due to discharge of untreated sewage, and it is particularly pleasing therefore to report that the Contractors are at present making excellent progress on the Council's scheme to re sewer that part of Highbridge and to include it in the general sewerage system of the Urban District.

Refuse Disposal

Domestic refuse is removed by the Council on a weekly collection and disposal is by tipping and covering in a disused pit. Conditions have not always been satisfactory, but the introduction of a mechanical plant in recent years has certainly resulted in improvement. The existing tip is isolated and as a result no serious nuisance has resulted from tipping operations, but it will soon be necessary for the Council to obtain a new site for refuse disposal and if public health nuisance is to be avoided, it will be necessary to choose a new site carefully and to consider the best system of refuse disposal for that site. Generally speaking Controlled Tipping in accordance with the standard laid down by the Ministry of Health is the most satisfactory and the most economical method applicable to an urban area.

Camping Sites

No licences have been issued for stationing of individual moveable dwellings. Five camping sites have been licensed. Sanitary conditions remain satisfactory. The existing sites have been reasonably well conducted during the holiday season.

Common Lodging Houses

There are no registered Common Lodging Houses in the Urban District.

Ice Cream

The number of premises registered for manufacture and sale 2

For retail only 59

27 samples were taken during the year, the results being as follows:-

24 samples were placed in Provisional Grade	1
2 samples were placed in Provisional Grade	2
1 sample was placed in Provisional Grade	4

Samples which fall into grades 1 and 2 are considered to be satisfactory. Samples reported in grades 3 and 4 are followed by inspection, and where indicated advice is given on measures necessary to improve the quality of the product.

Slaughterhouses

Ample facilities for slaughtering are available at the abattoir at Weston-super-Mare, and consequently the only slaughterhouse in the District which was licensed was that of the Highbridge Bacon Company.

To comply with the Meat Inspection Regulations 1963, it was necessary for the Council to employ a qualified Meat Inspector to work full time at the Bacon Factory, but this appointment terminated at the end of the year with the closure of the factory.

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during the year were as follows:-

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed					38,296	
Number inspected					38,296	
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u> Whole carcasses condemned					46	
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned					1,573	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis and cysticerci					4.2%	
<u>Tuberculosis only</u> Whole carcasses condemned					1	
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned					2,604	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis					6.8%	
Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for						
(a) Tuberculosis					26,329	
(b) Cysticercosis					-	
(c) Other					9,150	
Total (in lbs.) condemned					35,479	

Premises where food is prepared

No statutory action was taken regarding enforcement of the provision of the Food and Drugs Act, and co-operation from food traders has continued to be good and improvements have been made to premises and equipment.

Knackers Yard

One knackers yard is registered in this District and is visited frequently.

FACTORIES ACT 1961

The following particulars indicate the action taken under Part I of the Factories Act, 1961.

Premises	Number on Register	Insp.	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	24	9		
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	92	28		
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises)				
Total	116	37		

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	1	1			
Overcrowding (S.2)					
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)					
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)					
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)					
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient					
(b) Unsafe or defective	2	2			
(c) Not separate for sexes					
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)					
Total	3	3			

PART VIII

(Sections 133 and 134)

		Section 133		Section 134		
Nature of Work		No. of out- workers in August list required by Section 133(1)(c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecu- tions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwhole- some premises	Prose- cutions
					Notices served	
earing) pparel	Making etc., Cleaning and washing	4				

